



International  
Services



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**Date: July 16, 2001**

USAID Development Experience Clearinghouse  
Attn: Document Acquisitions  
1611 Kent Street, Suite 200  
Arlington, VA 22209

Dear Sir or Madam:

Attached is the final narrative report for Award No. AOT-G-00-00-00116-00. With your assistance, American Red Cross provided supplementary food rations to approximately 24,000 beneficiaries in Welayita Ethiopia for a period of 8 months as stipulated in the Award.

Thanks for your support in providing relief assistance to the vulnerable in Welayita Ethiopia.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for further information if necessary.

Sincerely,

Frederick Opuni-Mensah  
American Red Cross  
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Washington DC 20006

## Final Report

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Program Title:  
Cooperative Agreement/ Grant No.  
Country  
Disaster  
Time period covered by this report

**Emergency Assistance to Drought-Affected Ofa (N. Omo)**  
**AOT-G-00-00-00116-00**  
**Ethiopia**  
**Drought related food insecurity**  
**May 14<sup>th</sup>, 2000 to April 15<sup>th</sup>, 2001**

### I. Executive Summary

#### Objectives and Indicators

**Indicator and Current Measure:** The final nutritional survey conducted at the end of the program (April 2001) indicates a global malnutrition rate of 18.3% among children under 5. While very high, when compared to the baseline survey conducted in October 2000 (when a global malnutrition rate of 19.6% was shown) this shows a decrease of 6.6% against a base of 19.6%. This low decrease is due to two factors: 1) the general bulk ration from WFP was not distributed 2) the food distributed via the OFDA grant was supplemental (4.5 kg) and was in most likelihood shared among all family members due to the lack of a general ration. Nonetheless, during that same period of time, severe acute malnutrition rate went down by 23% from 3.5% to 2.7%. Both survey documents have previously been made available to OFDA.

#### **Resources:**

*Budget for Objective #1:* \_\_\_\_\_ Expended for this Period \_\_\_\_\_  
Cumulative Expenditures to Date \_\_\_\_\_ Balance \_\_\_\_\_

#### **Indicator and Current Measure:**

A total of 8,331 vulnerable farmers were targeted for seed and fertilizer distribution to improve the prospects for attaining food self-sufficiency in the current harvest cycle. Unlike the preceding last two years, the *belg* season rainfall was late but adequate this year in the program target area. Although seed has germinated, the final household impact is not known, as crops have not yet matured. The distributed seed and fertilizer package is expected to yield 1.04 mt of food/household, for a landholding of .21 hectares of land. This targeting was appropriate, given that the average family holding in the region of .25 hectare.

#### **Resources:**

*Budget for Objective #2* \_\_\_\_\_ Expended for this Period \_\_\_\_\_  
Cumulative Expenditures to Date \_\_\_\_\_ Balance \_\_\_\_\_

**\* See financial Report**

### **Objective #3: To build local capacity for disaster preparedness and emergency response.**

**Indicator and Current Measure:** 44 Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) volunteers received training in food distribution, registration and monitoring of the beneficiary population. Training was also provided in 1) distribution of food and agricultural inputs and 2) to conduct anthropometrical measurements and growth monitoring. 27 additional volunteers in these areas received training in conducting nutritional surveillance using anthropometrics for children under five with Salter scales and height boards.

The training has assisted in insuring more accurate targeting and selection of vulnerable populations. Another benefit in terms of local capacity building was the creation of basic nutrition awareness and improved child-feeding practices among woman. Following training, efforts were made by volunteers to household visits to continue educating them on the beneficiaries on child feeding practices.

#### **Resources:**

Budget for Objective #3 \_\_\_\_\_ Expended for this Period \_\_\_\_\_

Cumulative Expenditures to Date \_\_\_\_\_ Balance \_\_\_\_\_

\*See financial report

## **II. Program Overview**

The original ARC program proposal targeted the S. Wollo Zone for a similar, supplementary food and agriculture intervention. However, analysis and deliberation with the Ethiopia Red Cross Society (ERCS) resulted in two ARC missions to Ethiopia during the month of July, 2000, and brought into focus the urgent need in the Welayita Zone, following the failed *belg* rains (according to the program impact survey, *belg* crops constitute 70% of annual production among the target group). Discussion with the OFDA country representative in Addis Ababa contributed additional clarity to the overall situation in the area regarding other agencies working in-country, which led to the determination in mid-July to re-target the proposed intervention (see letter to A. Paro of 7 July 2000).

As a result, a three-month no-cost extension was required to insure good targeting and impact, and was applied for and approved in early January 2001. Thus the actual program intervention in the Welayita area ran for the anticipated 8 months, from mid-August 2000 through mid-April 2001.

- **Target Area: Ofa woreda, Welayita**

The Ofa woreda, located in the North Omo Zone, Southern Nations, Nationalities and Peoples Region (SNNPR) is 350 km south of Addis Ababa. The woreda is characterized by a rugged, mountainous topography with valleys and gorges, divided into 26 kebeles, with a total population of 134,154 and density of 125-712 people/km<sup>2</sup>.

The region of Welayita has been identified for a number of years as a food insecure area. This is due to a combination of factors, among them: high population density, small land holdings and serious soil erosion. Further, utter reliance on rain-fed agriculture by the majority of farmers in an area, which receives erratic rainfall, adds to the already fragile situation.

According to the Inter-Agency, *North Omo Zone Belg Season Pre-Harvest Assessment Report* (DPPC July 2000), a 48% decrease in harvest yield from 1999 was expected in Welayita. The late start of the rains in the end of April had delayed land preparation, while the green maize crop, which would normally have been available in June, had not yet matured to the harvesting stage by mid-July. Poor and erratic rainfall thereafter further eroded yield potential. Sweet potato, heavily relied on in the Welayita area, registered a staggering 98% failure due to the period of prolonged drought that peaked in May. Ofa woreda was projected to have a 60% reduction in the year 2000 *belg* crop, which would only start to be harvested in early-September 2000. There was a clear need for a food program intervention.

- **Intervention Objectives and Beneficiary Profile**

The American Red Cross (ARC) supported the Ethiopian Red Cross Society (ERCS) in the implementation of a 8-month supplementary feeding program for 20,300 people who relied on the *belg* rains for their survival to address the food security needs. The program targeted children under 5, pregnant women, lactating mothers, elderly and disabled who had been dependent upon general food assistance as a result of crop failure due to drought in the woreda of Ofa in the Welayita region. The program provided each of the targeted beneficiaries with 4.5 kg/month of fortified food as a supplement. A nutrition survey was undertaken at the beginning and the end of the project to assess impact. Toward the end of the distribution of supplementary food, the families of the beneficiaries were assessed to determine eligibility for a seed and fertilizer distribution supplied by the Red Cross for planting during the *belg* rains.

The goal of the project was to reduce the number of malnourished children under 5 by 20% within 8 months and simultaneously to improve the capacity of the ERCS to respond to emergencies of this nature, through training of volunteers and staff in the target area.

ERCS and ARC targeted the vulnerable 35% of the DPPC registered affected population (program targeted children under 5, pregnant women, lactating mothers, elderly and disabled) to forestall further nutritional decline and decrease the number of malnourished.

Woreda	Total Pop*	Affected Pop*	Target Group	UNIMIX/month (Mt)
Ofa	134,154	58,000	20,300	91.35

*\* Both of these figures are taken from the woreda level authorities, and are somewhat higher than those reported by the DPPC.*

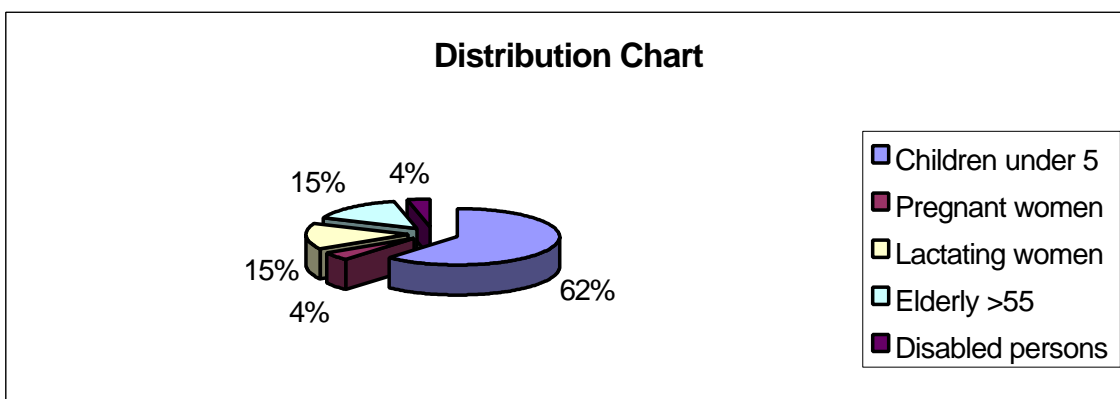
### **III. Program Performance**

- **Supplementary Food Distribution**

A total of 616.450 metric tons of supplementary food was distributed to more than 20,300 vulnerable per month for seven months (in addition to the 1<sup>st</sup> month of planning). The distributions took place in three remote sites in the woreda. Each beneficiary received 4.5 kg/month, with the exception for the last (7<sup>th</sup> - additional to the planned 6) distribution in early March, in which each received 3.1 kg.

Description of the beneficiary group breaks down as follows: 12,692 children under five, 924 pregnant women, 3,014 lactating women, 3,103 elderly (55 years of age and older), and 728 disabled persons.

Figure 1:



A baseline nutritional survey was conducted in October 2000 by a national consultant to assess the malnutrition level in the woreda of Ofa, as well as to measure baseline information on food and nutrition needs of children under five, pregnant and lactating women, and elderly and disabled. This study sampled 867 children under five in 30 clusters and found a 19.6% global malnutrition rate among the sample population with 3.5% severe acute malnutrition.

The final nutritional survey was conducted in April 2001, sampling 1,090 children under five, in 30 clusters, randomly selected from within the woreda. Mothers were also interviewed around a variety of subjects using structured questionnaires. This evaluation found a global malnutrition rate of 18.3% among children under 5, representing a reduction of 6.6% compared to the baseline. During that same period of time, severe acute malnutrition rate went down by 23% from 3.5% to 2.7%. Both survey documents as well provide relevant information concerning beneficiary profile and overall demographic and food security information for the target area.

The reduction in overall malnutrition rate should be viewed in light of several constraining factors. Firstly, the final nutrition survey was conducted only one month after the last supplementary food distribution. More importantly, the supplementary food distribution was not complemented as initially foreseen by a general bulk ration distribution of the Ethiopian Government's Disaster Preparedness and Prevention Commission (DPPC), thus mitigating the impact of the supplement. The general ration was curtailed in September 2000, and repeated advocacy efforts at both the local and national levels to achieve a re-institution, were not successful. Nonetheless, even this decrease of 6.6% is important during a time of such severe food insecurity.

This scenario further highlights the oft-discussed need for coordination of supplementary and general rations to achieve maximum impact during periods of acute food shortage. A critical assumption of the intervention, continuation of the general ration (which had been assured at the national level), proved outside of the ERCS/ARC sphere of influence. This must be borne in mind when considering future interventions of this type, and efforts to mobilize the full leverage of IO and NGO stakeholders reinforced.

The significant 23% reduction in severe acute malnutrition over the intervention period remains significant. The final impact assessment providing additional impact data, showing that morbidity due to diarrhea had decreased by 50%.

- **Agricultural Intervention**

8,331 farming beneficiaries received a total of 80 Mt of seeds (maize and haricot bean), and 50 Mt of fertilizer for use during the *belq*-farming season. 50 Mt of haricot bean seed, and 30 metric tons of maize seeds were procured; as well as 25 metric tons of urea fertilizer and 25 metric tons of Diamonium phosphate (DAP).

#### Distribution Sites for Seed and Fertilizer

<i><b>Name of Site</b></i>	<i><b>No. of Benef. Families</b></i>	<i><b>Beans (kg)</b></i>	<i><b>Maize (kg)</b></i>	<i><b>Urea (kg)</b></i>	<i><b>DAP fertilizer (kg)</b></i>
Gesuba	3988	23.928	14.356	11.964	11.964
Yakima	2073	13.474	7.462	6.219	6.219
Wamuru	2270	13.620	8.172	6.810	6.810

The Red Cross volunteers visited each of the 26 kebeles in Ofa, gathering the names of 8,170 vulnerable farmers who qualified to receive agricultural inputs based on jointly defined MoA and RC criterion. The determination was made with reference to: registration on the RC supplementary food list, land holding and capacity to farm (whether by self, or assisted by neighbors or extended family). Additional 161 vulnerable farmers were added at the end of the distribution to receive the remaining seeds and fertilizer, bringing the total number of beneficiary families to 8,331.

The majority of the targeted families have access to approximately 0.25 hectare (0.625 acre) of land. Distributed quantities of seed and fertilizer were based on this acreage. Each family received: 6-kg bean seed, 3.6 maize seed, 3-kg urea fertilizer, and 3 kg DAP fertilizer. The quantities distributed are expected to yield 1.04 Mt of food/household, requiring .21 hectares of land. The quantity of seed/average landholding was thus adequate and farmers were encouraged, through the Red Cross volunteers, to supplement the quantity of chemical fertilizers with organic compost and manure, widely used in the area.

The average household size reported in both the baseline and final impact evaluations was 6.1 persons. The anticipated yield from the distributed seed should provide each household member then with 5.3-kg beans/month and 8.9 kg maize/month. In terms of kilocalories, each family member thus has access to additional 1,654 kilocalories a day or roughly 78% of the daily energy requirement (2,100 kcal/day, SPHERE Standard measure). This is higher than the recommended DPPC general ration of 12.5-kg grain/month (1,500 kilocalories). This will be very important in terms of additional self-sustained food availability in these chronically food-deficit households. Additionally, the bean consumption will provide roughly 44-g protein/day or 75% daily requirement (52-63g/day, SPHERE Standard measure). Again, given the nutritional protein-energy malnutrition that bedevils these households, the protein sources will be especially important to children's growth.

- **Training and Capacity Building:**

44 ERCS volunteers received training on how to conduct food distribution, registration and targeting, and household monitoring. 27 volunteers received additional training on conducting nutritional surveillance using anthropometrics for children under five with Salter scales and height boards. Volunteers were also trained in nutrition education (including the importance of food diversification) and provided this at the community level.

The ERCS staff engaged in the intervention had had little experience of this sort in the past. Complementary field training was provided to the ERCS staff of North Omo and Welayita branches and included logistics and warehouse management curricula.

It should be noted that obstacles were encountered in ARC/ERCS efforts to apply agreed upon, nationally defined targeting standards – for both supplementary food and agricultural input distributions. Liaison with regional authorities was often required to resolve disputes. In the face of this, efforts to impart systematic targeting practices to ERCS staff and volunteers may have been less than wholly successful.

Significant material inputs to the ERCS included the renovation and remodeling of the local ERCS office and the purchase of an all-terrain motorcycle for branch use. This facilities upgrade facilitated program implementation and the motorcycle should also help the branch to provide relevant early warning data in the future.

Using other sources of funding, the ARC and ERCS also undertook the rehabilitation of a water supply project in Gesuba, the main town in Ofa. An 18 KVA diesel generator, pipes and accessories were procured and installed to channel water to the Ofa Woreda Health Center. Two separate water points/structures were constructed to allow the general population to access the rehabilitated facility.

### **Challenges & Constraints:**

**Cancellation of the general food ration:** The original proposal was devised on the assumption and the assurance that the Government's Ethiopian Disaster Prevention and Preparedness Committee (DPPC) would continue its general bulk food distribution. However, as the Red Cross was ready to start its first supplementary distribution, the DPPC halted its general food distribution and thus adversely affecting the impact of the program.

**Unreliable DPPC/local government beneficiaries' lists:** The DPPC lists, which were used for the first supplementary distribution by the American Red Cross, contained a large number of beneficiaries who did not qualify as vulnerable. Amcross attempts to undertake better targeting and selection of beneficiaries by sending trained Red Cross volunteers to undertake measurements and compile a new list of beneficiaries was met with fierce resistance by the local authorities. The program was halted several times and the Delegate of the American Red Cross had to often seek the intervention of higher regional authorities. The same situation occurred prior and during the agricultural distribution. At the start of the project, the Delegate requested the assistance of the local office of the Department of Agriculture (DOA) for compiling a list of vulnerable and destitute farmers through its local official networks known as Development Assistants. Yet, upon a double check of the DOA list against Amcross food distribution lists, major discrepancies were found, and the Red Cross volunteers were sent to the kebeles (villages) to check the status of the beneficiaries of the DOA list. A new list of beneficiaries for seeds and fertilizer were compiled. Thus, prompting the local authorities, including the Administrator of the Welayita zone, to stop the distribution of agricultural inputs. It took a lot of patient efforts, negotiations and valuable time to convince them to allow the distribution to resume.

**Lack of support from local authorities:** Throughout the relief operation, the local authorities were concerned only about control of the distribution of food, seeds and fertilizer. The insistence of Amcross to respect the criteria for vulnerable beneficiaries and the need to deploy Red Cross volunteers to compile lists, led to difficult interactions with the local authorities and often disruption of the relief operation.

**Weak human resources capacity:** The few local staff employed in the relief operation who were local ERCS personnel, did not have any prior experience in any emergency relief operation. An experienced emergency relief officer who was sent from the ERCS headquarters to assist with the distribution and particularly with relations with the authorities withdrew from the operation after her initial visits.

**Difficult road access:** To provide better access to the beneficiaries, a total of three storage and distribution sites were opened throughout the vast district. Yet these efforts were hampered at the start of the relief operation due to the continuing rainstorms, particularly in the highland parts of the area, which made the difficult terrain and dirt roads inaccessible for food loaded trucks to reach certain remote parts Of Ofa.